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14 April 1971

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: OCI's NIS Obligations

1. The memorandum commenting on OCI's research program suggests that the time and resources allotted to the NIS program might be reduced without sacrificing the quality of the product. There seems to be a general consensus that the maximum time required for a major rewrite job (not merely an updating or tinkering with the existing text) is six months if one analyst does both Sections 4 and 5, and four months per section if two analysts are assigned. If a satisfactory General Survey is up for routine "maintenance," six weeks per section represent an adequate investment. With few exceptions, competent analysts should be able to reduce substantially the time required for both major re-writes and maintenance.

2. "Competent analysts" should be taken to mean officers with solid experience in the countries assigned to them. As a general rule, it should be Office policy that NIS sections are not to be assigned to trainees or to new and untested employees. If a good General Survey is available, a new officer without experience on the country might be assigned the task of distilling the Survey into a Country Handbook, provided that senior analysts and branch chiefs provide close supervision.

3. NIS schedules and unforeseeable demands on the time of analysts and Research Officers sometimes create a need for greater flexibility in managing NIS production. Consideration should be given to designating deputy R.O.'s or ad hoc assistants who could serve as utility men in

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rush periods in which the R.O. must deal with more than one section of the NIS. The deputy R.O. could take responsibility for one or more sections in crunch periods only or, alternatively, he could be assigned to oversee the entire production process. Obviously, there is no satisfactory substitute for meeting the various phases of the schedule on time, but the NIS performance might be improved by providing temporary assistance to the R.O. in unavoidable rush periods.

4. Unless there are compelling extenuating circumstances, Fitness Reports of officers assigned to the NIS should take into account their performance in meeting production schedules.

25X1A [REDACTED] Chief, Research Staff

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NIS Measures for Consideration

1. Role of deputy branch chief
2. Fitness reports
3. Promotion policy
4. Reserve editing power
5. Use of NIS for training assignments
6. Diversion of weak or in-training personnel to handbooks
7. Allotment of time per section

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9 April 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: Richard Lehman, Director, Office of **25X1A**
Current Intelligence

THROUGH : [REDACTED] Chief, Research Staff

SUBJECT : The Future Role of the NIS in OCI Activity

Of the future of the NIS itself, it is for Jack King to speak. But whatever form the NIS takes, it is hard to imagine it without a substantial political section and almost equally hard to imagine this section being produced without OCI's assistance. And if OCI is to play its NIS role more effectively than in the past, there are a number of points which its senior people might profitably consider. I venture some statements below--in general terms for wider discussion, with appended specifics in some instances primarily for your eyes--attempting in this statement the inherently difficult trick of combining the close-up experience of the past half-dozen years with the artificially detached point of view that might be found, say, in an inquiring staff member of PFIAB.

My general points on what the NIS needs in OCI can be indicated by the varied implications of one word: recognition. Viz:

1. Recognition of the validity of the basic government reference work as a category of intelligence with standards distinct on the one hand from those of current reporting and, on the other, from the analytical research paper which probes for new insights into power relationships.
2. Recognition that production of contributions to the principal government-wide reference work is a regular, budgeted part of OCI activity, not a semi-accidental response to a temporary administrative emergency.
3. Recognition that producing such reference work requires adequate manpower, both qualitatively and quantitatively, and that cheese-paring in either respect is likely to cost the government more money in the end. (See Annex A on manpower requirements.)

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SUBJECT: The Future Role of the NIS in OCI Activity

4. Recognition that the NIS's distinct standards and differing conditions of production (as regards such matters as long lead-times on scheduling and the fact that the end-product leaves the office laterally without coming to the attention of OCI's top command) necessitate special administrative arrangements to give such work effective equality of treatment in OCI--not just oral declarations to the effect that NIS work already has it. (See Annex B on administrative arrangements.)
5. Recognition that the NIS is entering an innovative phase, not necessarily in what its products say (the kind of innovation OCI is habituated to look for) but in the way they say it--since basic intelligence, more than most kinds, is a problem of effective communication.
6. Recognition, correspondingly, of the need on OCI's part for flexibility regarding the NIS--a quality we have not always displayed in the past. (See Annex C for particulars.)

It will probably be said that all of the above points are already recognized in OCI, and in a sense this is true. But the statement is a bit reminiscent of those heard before World War II about the job rights of women and Negroes--that both groups were indubitably recognized as fully equal, and that all which could really be done for them was already being done or very shortly would be. The NIS's essential problem in OCI is not that of winning formal acknowledgment of a principle or principles, but of obtaining effective implementation--a complicated, undramatic business--of those principles in day-to-day operations.

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Deputy for NIS, Research Staff

Attachments:

- Annex A re manpower
- Annex B re administration
- Annex C re flexibility

ANNEX A: Manpower requirements for NIS production

1. It is more profitable to start discussion of NIS manpower requirements on the qualitative than on the quantitative side. OCI has had analysts incapable of writing a good General Survey political section no matter how many hours they are assigned in which to do so, and their forced efforts in this direction have necessitated the work's being in part done over by higher priced talent and in part sent forward in patched-up form, to the cost (in non-financially-calculable terms) of the ultimate consumer and of OCI's reputation. Experience to date suggests that the skill needed for the NIS is by no means so rare as that needed for an analytical research paper that seeks to break new ground substantively--as the NIS does not--but considerably rarer than the ability to gist a cable with a brief comment. Much has been achieved by patient instruction on the initial production level and by flexibility in making NIS assignments (as discussed below), but it is expensively unrealistic to assume that all OCI analysts represent adequate NIS manpower.

2. On the quantitative side, the traditional rule-of-thumb has been three months each for a sociological section and a political section written by the same analyst, or four months each if written by different analysts. Various more detailed calculations have produced estimates both lower and higher than this; the most recent such estimate (and to me the most impressive because of its source) is one of only six weeks for a complete updating of a first-rate existing sociological section, and four months for a good analyst to produce such a section completely from scratch. It is wide variance of this sort (particularly at a time when the existing General Survey may well be on the threshold of extensive structural change) that inclines me to believe that the old rule-of-thumb figure is still the safest to continue using for overall manpower allocations--having in mind also that even the most expansive estimates of OCI's manpower expenditures on the NIS still fall considerably short of our manpower increment from the old NIS Research Division.

ANNEX A: Manpower requirements for NIS production

3. Flexibility and imagination in making individual NIS assignments can make more efficient use of our manpower for this purpose than has always been done in the past. There is the question of incentives and general morale, discussed in Annex B below; there is the fact that a given analyst may do much better work on one aspect of the NIS than on another; there is also the more frequently observed fact that a particular analyst may produce quite a creditable NIS section at his own rather slow pace but may, in effect, go to pieces if held to a schedule suitable only for one of OCI's faster-working branch chiefs. And people can go stale and rigidified from an unrelieved diet of NIS production just as they can from too long and unvaried assignment to any other of an OCI analyst's tasks.

Annex B: The administrative arrangements of NIS production

1. A fundamental difficulty confronting NIS activity within OCI is that, though a markedly different kind of intelligence production from that of current reporting, it has to live within a context of administrative arrangements and working procedures designed for current intelligence before the NIS's arrival in OCI. Some of the practical differences this makes were set forth in greater detail in the third attachment (Annex C) to my long report of 23 July 1970 on OCI's Contribution to the NIS Program, a xerox of which annex is attached. Though the annex was mainly descriptive, the report itself argued that the NIS operation could not have the status it needs in OCI merely by oral pronouncement but required certain administrative action to compensate for the difficulties described in the annex.

2. One point the report focused on particularly was office personnel policy as it affects the analyst whose work and talents are mainly NIS. The report argues that such an analyst is not really rated on the same competitive basis as his current intelligence colleague under the present system, whereby his end-product passes laterally out of the office without normally being seen by anyone higher in the direct chain of command than the analyst's branch chief. It suggests that promotion of an NIS analyst is thus based on no more solid knowledge of his actual performance than the fact of his NIS assignment, the endorsement of his division chief and perhaps a polite comment by a distant Embassy reviewer not too familiar with the NIS generally and necessarily ignorant of how much of the draft before him is the analyst's own work and how much that of subsequent revisers. Thus (as further argued in my memo of 13 January 1971 on OCI promotion procedures, xerox of which is attached) we do not have office-wide competition on NIS work in the sense this exists on current intelligence activity, and this has not been without its effects on analyst morale. It is the familiar story of it's not being enough for justice to be done, but it's needing to be manifestly seen that justice is done; I would be prepared to mention the names of several people who are at least reputed to have received promotions for NIS work that their peers in the field would regard as below standard rather than above.

3. The recommendation for remedial action in the personnel field, made last summer and repeated now, is that on Fitness Reports of a regional division's NIS officer and its branch chiefs, the DD/OCI (or other front office reviewing officer) ask for the views of Res/NIS on

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Annex B: The administrative arrangements of NIS production

the NIS performance concerned before giving his judgment. A similar procedure would be followed before a promotion action on anyone with substantial NIS responsibilities went to the Career Service Board. In both instances Res/NIS would be prepared, on request, to elicit competent OBGI views on comparative NIS performance.

4. Other administrative arrangements for NIS work seem to me to be quite secondary to those governing the critical matters of assigning competent personnel to the NIS job, seeing that they are given sufficient time to do it, and seeing that they are suitably rewarded when they do it well. The system of divisional R.O. officers for NIS production seems to me an inherently good one, which works well when these critical matters are satisfactorily taken care of (i.e. when the incumbent is skilled and energetic and has adequate division-office support at all stages in the process) but cannot produce good results when these factors are working against it. One example might drive this point home. It is generally agreed that NIS production on Africa has shown a marked improvement over the past year or so. Yet, except for a single year which he spent as chief of one of the Africa branches, [REDACTED] has been in charge of NIS production on Africa during the whole time it has been in OCT, ~~and~~ I would consider that he has become more skilled and energetic personally during this time but that the determining difference has been the support received in the matters indicated above from [REDACTED]

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Attachments: (Xerox copies)
Annex C to report of 1/23/70
Memo of 1/13/71

ANNEX C: Flexibility and the NIS

1. It has been almost an article of faith in OCI that we are unfailingly flexible and the NIS is impossibly rigid. This is a judgment based more on the generally fast reaction-time of OCI synapses responding to sudden intelligence demands from Higher Authority than to sober analysis of the specific behavior of OCI personnel dealing with the NIS. I have no wish to question our general ability to be light on our feet, but OCI flexibility has not been too evident in such behavior as seeking postponements of interagency deadlines for OCI administrative reasons; delivering NIS drafts exactly on their internal deadlines irrespective of their condition; arguing with great dedication and ingenuity the letter of the law on NIS guidance outlines in endeavors to avoid revising OCI first drafts; calling for changes in NIS programming on an all-or-nothing basis when substantive developments compel adjustment in this programming. The case of the Cambodia General Survey is a current case in point, though not the only one that has arisen regarding a Southeast Asian country. There was probably emotional satisfaction gained in the Far East Division last summer from demanding ~~that~~ the Cambodia General Survey's postponement in toto and sine die, but the modified basis on which the Cambodia General Survey is now being completed is about the same as OBGI would have been willing to agree on at the time--the chief net differences in the situation being delay in meeting user demands for the book and the absence from FE Division of [REDACTED] who was available to work on it last summer.

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2. The main point, however, in recalling these past OCI lapses from flexibility is that the NIS now seems to stand on the threshold of extensive change and greatly increased flexibility will probably be needed from OCI. It is evident already that the desired new style of the General Survey's introductory section about a country will make new demands, both for a level of writing talent that we have not always applied to NIS work in the past and for more numerous and more radical revisions than the drafts of these introductory sections have previously received. We should be psychologically and administratively prepared for this.

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MEMORANDUM: On OCI Research

1. Is the Office doing enough political research? What is enough?

In the past two years, we have published some 20 research reports; nine are now in various stages of preparation. This is a promising beginning for an expanded research program. All of these papers have been solid pieces of research and reporting; all have addressed matters of considerable interest to US policy and operations.

2. Looking ahead, we might consider several ways to strengthen this program.

A. The substantive coverage of major international areas and issues could be broadened. Insofar as possible, priority should be given to studies in depth of the major problems on the current and prospective agenda of US policy. In some cases, such studies could draw on contributions to the various papers being produced for the NSC machinery. These studies need not in every case be formal intelligence reports published under the CIA seal. Some could be informal "think pieces" designed for circulation within the Agency and to interested policy officers, such as the NSC Staff. Tom Latimer testifies that a ready market for such papers exists.

3. We should consider projects of briefer scope and more limited focus than the exhaustive studies produced, for example, by [redacted]

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25X1A [redacted] The Office cannot afford to assign more than a handful of analysts to long-term papers on a full-time basis. We would have a better chance of attracting readers if we offered relatively brief papers

(25 - 50 pages) featuring in-depth treatment of well-defined, limited subjects. (for example, the present papers on Brandt's Ostpolitik, Britain and the ANC, and the Communist movement in Laos). With a few exceptions, it might be advisable to leave studies of "definitive" and exhaustive length and detail to CCS. CCI should concentrate more on policy-oriented, analytical treatment of current international problems and those issues and trends in domestic affairs that have a direct bearing on a nation's foreign attitudes and behavior. The test proposed here is relevance to current US policy and support for current reporting, not an "academic" concern for investigating new and unexplored territory as an end in itself.

C. A greater effort should be made to bring younger officers into the research program. The task of reviewing a political situation in detail or examining a line of policy developments would provide an excellent test of the skills and aptitudes of junior analysts. Solid research studies, moreover, would give these people an educational experience in intelligence production and an opportunity for professional and intellectual growth they may never have had in routine current intelligence or MIS duties. There is no better way to develop mastery of a subject than to march through the process of reviewing all available material (including detective work on sources outside CCI files), formulating a meaningful conceptual framework, drafting a coherent narrative, and contriving a reasoned assessment of the significance, implications and possible consequences of a sequence of events and decisions.

D. Insofar as possible, assignments to research projects should be a routine part of the career development program. All new analysts should

be given an opportunity to perform a demanding research project some time during their first three years on duty. This would be educational for supervisors as well as for analysts. Some of these undertakings probably would fall short of standards required for formal publication, but the experience of coming to grips with a serious analytical and drafting problem would nonetheless have lasting value.

3. The perennial question, of course, is how to find the necessary time and talent to broaden the research program. The original assumption was that greater emphasis on research "would make a considerable change in the day-to-day activities of many analysts." This has occurred to a limited extent but the impression remains that we have not been notably successful in reordering long-standing priorities and manipulating current and NIS assignments in a way that would free more analysts for useful political research.

4. Another assumption at the outset was that there was a reservoir of time and talent that could be tapped for research assignments--that the current reporting duties of many analysts were not so demanding that they couldn't devote an hour or so a day or several hours a week to research. Has this assumption been given a fair test? For some of our analysts, particularly those with the greatest energy and potential, the daily routine of reading traffic and preparing occasional brief items for publication carries obvious dangers of intellectual and professional stagnation. In the less active desks, there are real hazards in under-employment and in feelings that one's talents and training are not being given adequate outlet.

5. How do we encourage initiative on the part of our analysts? The Research Staff can propose projects (and will continue to do so), but

it is the branch chief level, under a clear mandate from division chiefs, that would be the most effective source of stimulation and guidance. Incentive might be enhanced if all hands had a clear understanding that research is regarded by senior management as an important aspect of career development.

6. Consideration might be given to developing a more formal procedure in planning research. One approach would be for the Chief of Research, in consultation with Division Chiefs, to make periodic recommendations to the Office Director on research priorities. These recommendations would define the scope and purpose of proposed projects, designate project officers and authors, and discuss any personnel re-assignments or adjustments required to free authors to devote a substantial amount of their time to research. The Office Director could then weigh research priorities against competing demands and determine which projects should go forward and which should be deferred or dropped.

7. There are two related areas that might be considered in seeking ways to free more manpower and time for research. The first would involve a fresh look at current reporting assignments with a view to achieving greater flexibility. In these areas and country desks that are not seized with a heavy schedule of daily reporting, it might not be unreasonable to require analysts to keep themselves more fully informed on developments in other countries in their area. Qualified professionals should have no great trouble in covering wider assignments; this would yield benefits in terms of broader qualifications as well as greater flexibility and responsiveness of manpower resources.

8. The second way to free more people for research would be to reduce the time and resources committed to the MIS program. The prevailing rule-of-thumb that allots three months each for the sociological section and the political section seems excessively generous in many cases involving primarily updating and minor rewriting. These commitments could be scaled down without substantially diminishing the quality and usefulness of OGI's MIS contributions.

9. These measures would take us some distance in freeing resources that could be put to more profitable use, from the viewpoint of both analysts and consumers. The responsibility and stimulus would seem to reside primarily at the branch chief level--the man who is in the best position to judge the needs and opportunities for useful research and to designate the people who are best equipped to do the job.

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2 March 1971

Dear Joe:

Thank you for your letter in regard to promotion policy. I find it useful and thought-provoking, but I think also that you misunderstood the intent of the CSB in making these most recent promotions.

Before addressing myself to your broader question of philosophy, let me say something about the specific point at issue. It is true that the three promotions to GS-13 from your Division are all of young men who have shown versatility. They are all, however, officers who had performed in their original specialty long enough to make a record of exacting performance and deep understanding of the subject matter. In fact, while each of them has had several assignments, only one has had an assignment not directly related to his specialty in Soviet affairs. It is only by coincidence that these three, who are directly competitive with one another and among whom it is difficult to make a choice, happened to come up for promotion at this time, simultaneously with a number of other GS-12s who, whether classed as generalist or as specialist, were clearly less capable.

There was one other promotion given at that session. This was given to the only other candidate who in my eyes was of comparable caliber. He comes from another Division but is of roughly the same age and length of service. He has spent his entire time in OCI on one country and would meet your standards for specialization and professionalism.

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There is no pat answer to the question of specialist versus generalist, and I am not going to give you one. OCI clearly has a requirement for both, in a proportion which will vary with demands on us from year to year and with the qualities of individuals. I would certainly subscribe to your statement that "for the man or woman who wants to specialize in the study of an area there is room in OCI to reach a senior level", but I would add the qualification that once one reaches the GS-15 level the "area" in question must necessarily begin to broaden. Three out of four of our Division Chiefs have been, in fact, specialists in their areas since the beginning of their careers, and I hope that management considerations permitting this practice will continue.

I would also subscribe to a parallel statement which said there is equal opportunity in OCI for the man who wants a variety of assignments in his career. You may find it hard to believe this, but the days when our first-rate young people leap at the opportunity for such things as overseas assignments are long gone. We have come so far in the opposite direction--or the aspirations of our young people are so changed--that it has become exceedingly difficult to wean the really good shoemaker away from his lasts. But the generalist jobs have to be done too, and if the best people will not do them we run the risk of creating a core of professional "staff" officers of lower caliber than the line analyst and increasingly insensitive to the problems which concern us where the serious analytic work is done.

Regardless of an analyst's total dedication to a specialty, I would like to see every officer in OCI whom we judge to have the potential for promotion to GS-14-15 have at least one tour, before he reaches that grade, in some other sort of job which would give him a different perspective on the intelligence business.

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I do not want to drag everyone simultaneously kicking and screaming out of the back room on to center stage, but I find that the analyst who understands why senior officers act as they do and why collection systems do not always respond as they might is infinitely more valuable than the man who has refused to leave his desk in the back room and who carps because senior officers are not content to let him decide what is important to them and because managers of collection systems do not always give his needs top priority. What is more, the office has to have a number of people sufficiently flexible to be drafted out of their specialty for a wide variety of jobs in an emergency.

Looking at it the other way, an officer has to have demonstrated his potential as a specialist before in my eyes he qualifies for a generalist assignment. I will not permit anyone to serve as a night senior duty officer who has not successfully held an analyst's desk. We cannot have someone exercising authority over our working analysts who has not had that experience and who cannot therefore see the problems from the analyst's point of view.

In any case, the analyst who goes to a generalist assignment should return upon completion of his tour to a line desk; the longer he stays away the more difficult to fit him back in and the more insulated he becomes from the real work of the office. I recognize there are a few people who are just too "action-minded" to be comfortable as analysts. We have room for some of these in the Operations Center, but in general, no matter how good they are, we have to encourage them to look elsewhere for jobs if they wish to progress to GS-13 and beyond.

Ideally, and of course the management of 250 quite diverse individuals yields results that are considerably less than ideal, a young officer should join

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us at about GS-9. He should at that point have demonstrated the ability to do scholarly work and, more important, have acquired a facility in writing.* The question of what degrees he holds and what field he has pursued seem to me to be secondary. We have had equally good--and bad--results with ABs and with PhDs; one could argue that it is easier to start fresh in a specialty than to unlearn the academic prejudices one has acquired.

This hypothetical analyst, if he is any good, would reach GS-12 or 13 within about seven years after entry, working in one branch and on one or two countries. At this point we would be making some basic decisions about him if he has shown the kind of professionalism which you and I admire. We would have tabbed him as an OCI "comer", and we would have considered whether this was an appropriate time for him to receive a generalist assignment. Depending on availability of course, we would hope all our first-rate young men have had such an assignment under their belt before they have progressed much further.

After this assignment we would expect the individual to return to his parent branch or take up a new specialty in another branch, depending both on his own desires and the office's requirements. He could then progress to GS-14 as a pure specialist without management responsibility. (We have also set aside a few GS-15 "personal ranks" for the exceptional senior specialist, but we will not be in a hurry to award them.) On the other hand, if this officer showed

*I am speaking here of the ability to apply the basic principles of expository English: how to construct a sentence and a paragraph; how to produce graceful prose. We can teach the peculiarities of intelligence writing and OCI style, but if an analyst has not acquired the fundamentals in 16-20 years of schooling, he will not learn them from us and he does not belong here.

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the inclination and the ability for broader responsibilities he might become a deputy branch chief, and, perhaps by the time he was a GS-14 and had been on board 10-12 years, a branch chief. (Beyond GS-15 jobs are so few and the competition so severe that laying out an ideal career becomes meaningless.) Within the bounds of such a program the adversary concept of generalist versus specialist is meaningless.

Finally, let me say that there is another sense to the word generalist. You yourself speak of increasing contributions to current intelligence by economic, military, and scientific specialists. It is true that where these specialists did not exist in the Agency, OCI was expected to do it all, but it is not true that in losing these responsibilities OCI's own responsibilities have been narrowed. Rather it seems to me that they have been broadened, and all the economic, military, and scientific intelligence now available has become a more sophisticated input to the political decisions on which senior leaders expect us to shed light. To achieve this synthesis our analyst must understand in some detail what the soldiers and economists are saying. The Soviet political desk officer is not expected to comprehend the wrubbling noises left on tape by a passing Soviet missile, but he must understand the conclusions drawn by the specialist from these noises and must be able to fit them into his picture of the Soviet decision-making machinery. To produce "the situation overview with the accent on the political"--and I totally agree with you that is what we are in business for--the analyst must be in no small way a generalist. Of course we need specialization on topics and countries, and we need people who are willing to keep their noses to the grind-stone long enough to acquire a mastery of their subjects. I think that our program will produce these and will give them the rewards they deserve. It will also, however,

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provide us with a leaven of what you might call specialists in broader problems of intelligence production, and we need those too.



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Richard Lehman

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17 March 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Deputy Director
for Intelligence

SUBJECT : Communication in OCI

1. Anyone in a senior position who attempts to write on the state of communications with his juniors should do so with all humility. Eleven years in the OCI front office have convinced me that one can at best have only a rough notion of what many people in the office are thinking, and that they in turn will misunderstand what management is thinking if there is any conceivable way of doing so. There is always some misanthrope somewhere in the depths of the organization who is harboring a secret grudge; one lady I know has constructed an elaborate scenario to convince herself that I have been out to "get her" since 1962; since she is still happily at work it is clear that either she misreads my intentions or underestimates my capability.

2. This said, I think communication from top to bottom and vice versa in OCI is pretty good as far as the best and most active people are concerned. This comes essentially from the nature of the work. The desk analyst handling a rapidly moving current intelligence problem is highly sought after by his seniors. He is constantly in contact with the OCI front office and quite often with the DDI and even the DCI. OCI does not work on a rigid hierarchical basis; my office normally deals directly with branch chiefs and analysts on particular substantive problems. Although we are

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organized on a standard Division-Branch-Desk pattern, our production process reflects a systems approach. Senior officers take a direct part and deal directly with the juniors concerned. The purpose of all these exchanges is of course substance, but they provide an atmosphere of openness and mutual confidence which makes communication on career matters and personal problems relatively easy.

3. We would like this atmosphere to be felt by all our junior professionals. Unfortunately it does not work this way. The nature of the process means that the bright young man who is self-starting and the analyst who by chance is assigned to a desk where things are happening feel that they are known and valued. The NIS writers, the analysts covering obscure African countries about which the USG rarely gives a damn, and the men who have demonstrated themselves to be mediocre do not get this treatment. They are not in direct communication with the front office, they are likely to be bored and frustrated, and we know less than we ought to know about what they think.

4. It is for the benefit of these people rather than our "comers" that we have rather recently established several mechanisms for more formal communication. First we have designated a full time career development officer, GS-15, in our Management Staff. His sole function is to stay in touch with analyst personnel, not as any sort of ombudsman but as a sensor for the front office, as a good listener, purveyor of advice, developer of career opportunities, and occasionally as an outplacement officer for the man who has "topped out" with us.

5. We have also established a system of formal correspondence between the OCI Career Service Board and each individual officer in grade 12 and below. This requires: a) that each analyst upon taking up a new assignment be given a memorandum from his branch chief

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describing exactly what is expected of him; b) that six months later the supervisor write for the analyst a status report on how he has performed in his new assignment; c) that every two years every analyst submit a report on himself and what he would like to do next; and d) that the Career Service Board consider each such report, and reply in writing with its own judgment of what the individual should do. We also consider the Agency's fitness report a part of this system. If the system works as it is designed to, it will force a systematic dialogue between the analyst and his branch chief and between the analyst and his Career Service Board.

6. Formal mechanisms, however, do not always work as well as one would like. In this case, they have so far been useful but not outstandingly so, partly because of the natural cynicism of the analyst, partly perhaps because of some of the personalities involved and most of all because of the basic intractability of the circumstances in which a mediocre officer finds himself in the Agency today. For him avenues for true development are limited, changing jobs is no longer easy, promotions are rare indeed, and the atmosphere outside government is not alluring.

7. We recognize that the younger people in the Agency have a set of values different from our own, and that they are facing circumstances far different from the heady opportunities which opened to those of us who joined the Agency in the late '40s and early '50s. We are looking for other and more effective ways of staying in contact with these people. I have considered and rejected the idea of organized meetings with groups of analysts to discuss personal and career problems; these upset normal management lines, tend to be artificial, and often degenerate into gripe sessions. I am, however, experimenting with a series of letters to OCI personnel dealing in an informal way with how I think the office

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should work. The first of these celebrated OCI's 20th anniversary on 15 January 1971. The second, which is designed to be leaked rather than disseminated, will deal with my ideas of career progression in the Current Intelligence Career Service. We are also planning a general re-examination of the roles of analyst, branch chief, editor and production officer out of which may come the material for future such letters. These letters initially will be one way--from me to the staff employees. I may, at some point, invite responses which might evoke some constructive ideas on how the office can function better and more harmoniously.

RICHARD LEHMAN
Director of Current Intelligence

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History

2 March 1971

Dear Joe:

Thank you for your letter in regard to promotion policy. I find it useful and thought-provoking, but I think also that you misunderstood the intent of the CSB in making these most recent promotions.

Before addressing myself to your broader question of philosophy, let me say something about the specific point at issue. It is true that the three promotions to GS-13 from your Division are all of young men who have shown versatility. They are all, however, officers who had performed in their original specialty long enough to make a record of exacting performance and deep understanding of the subject matter. In fact, while each of them has had several assignments, only one has had an assignment not directly related to his specialty in Soviet affairs. It is only by coincidence that these three, who are directly competitive with one another and among whom it is difficult to make a choice, happened to come up for promotion at this time, simultaneously with a number of other GS-12s who, whether classed as generalist or as specialist, were clearly less capable.

There was one other promotion given at that session. This was given to the only other candidate who in my eyes was of comparable caliber. He comes from another Division but is of roughly the same age and length of service. He has spent his entire time in OCI on one country and would meet your standards for specialization and professionalism.

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There is no pat answer to the question of specialist versus generalist, and I am not going to give you one. OCI clearly has a requirement for both, in a proportion which will vary with demands on us from year to year and with the qualities of individuals. I would certainly subscribe to your statement that "for the man or woman who wants to specialize in the study of an area there is room in OCI to reach a senior level", but I would add the qualification that once one reaches the GS-15 level the "area" in question must necessarily begin to broaden. Three out of four of our Division Chiefs have been, in fact, specialists in their areas since the beginning of their careers, and I hope that management considerations permitting this practice will continue.

I would also subscribe to a parallel statement which said there is equal opportunity in OCI for the man who wants a variety of assignments in his career. You may find it hard to believe this, but the days when our first-rate young people leap at the opportunity for such things as overseas assignments are long gone. We have come so far in the opposite direction--or the aspirations of our young people are so changed--that it has become exceedingly difficult to wean the really good shoemaker away from his lasts. But the generalist jobs have to be done too, and if the best people will not do them we run the risk of creating a core of professional "staff" officers of lower caliber than the line analyst and increasingly insensitive to the problems which concern us where the serious analytic work is done.

Regardless of an analyst's total dedication to a specialty, I would like to see every officer in OCI whom we judge to have the potential for promotion to GS-14-15 have at least one tour, before he reaches that grade, in some other sort of job which would give him a different perspective on the intelligence business.

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I do not want to drag everyone simultaneously kicking and screaming out of the back room on to center stage, but I find that the analyst who understands why senior officers act as they do and why collection systems do not always respond as they might is infinitely more valuable than the man who has refused to leave his desk in the back room and who carps because senior officers are not content to let him decide what is important to them and because managers of collection systems do not always give his needs top priority. What is more, the office has to have a number of people sufficiently flexible to be drafted out of their specialty for a wide variety of jobs in an emergency.

Looking at it the other way, an officer has to have demonstrated his potential as a specialist before in my eyes he qualifies for a generalist assignment. I will not permit anyone to serve as a night senior duty officer who has not successfully held an analyst's desk. We cannot have someone exercising authority over our working analysts who has not had that experience and who cannot therefore see the problems from the analyst's point of view.

In any case, the analyst who goes to a generalist assignment should return upon completion of his tour to a line desk; the longer he stays away the more difficult to fit him back in and the more insulated he becomes from the real work of the office. I recognize there are a few people who are just too "action-minded" to be comfortable as analysts. We have room for some of these in the Operations Center, but in general, no matter how good they are, we have to encourage them to look elsewhere for jobs if they wish to progress to GS-13 and beyond.

Ideally, and of course the management of 250 quite diverse individuals yields results that are considerably less than ideal, a young officer should join

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us at about GS-9. He should at that point have demonstrated the ability to do scholarly work and, more important, have acquired a facility in writing.* The question of what degrees he holds and what field he has pursued seem to me to be secondary. We have had equally good--and bad--results with ABs and with PhDs; one could argue that it is easier to start fresh in a specialty than to unlearn the academic prejudices one has acquired.

This hypothetical analyst would reach GS-12 or 13 about seven years after entry working in one branch and on one or two countries. At this point we would be making some basic decisions about him if he has shown the kind of professionalism which you and I admire. We would have tabbed him as an OCI "comer", and we would have considered whether this was an appropriate time for him to receive a generalist assignment. Depending on availability of course, we would hope all our first-rate young men have had such an assignment under their belt before they have progressed much further.

After this assignment we would expect the individual to return to his parent branch or take up a new specialty in another branch, depending both on his own desires and the office's requirements. He could then progress in at least a few cases to GS-15 as a pure specialist without management responsibility. On the other hand if he showed the inclination and the ability for broader responsibilities he might become a deputy branch chief, and, perhaps by the time he was a GS-14

*I am speaking here of the ability to apply the basic principles of expository English: how to construct a sentence and a paragraph; how to produce graceful prose. We can teach the peculiarities of intelligence writing and OCI style, but if an analyst has not acquired the fundamentals in 16-20 years of schooling, he will not learn them from us and he does not belong here.

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and had been on board 10-12 years a branch chief. (I will confess that promotions after GS-14 will come faster in the management line, and beyond GS-15 jobs are so few and the competition so severe that laying out an ideal career becomes meaningless.) Within the bounds of such a program the adversary concept of generalist versus specialist is meaningless.

Finally, let me say that there is another sense to the word generalist. You yourself speak of increasing contributions to current intelligence by economic, military, and scientific specialists. It is true that where these specialists did not exist in the Agency, OCI was expected to do it all, but it is not true that in losing these responsibilities OCI's own responsibilities have been narrowed. Rather it seems to me that they have been broadened, and all the economic, military, and scientific intelligence now available has become a more sophisticated input to the political decisions on which senior leaders expect us to shed light. To achieve this synthesis our analyst must understand in some detail what the soldiers and economists are saying. The Soviet political desk officer is not expected to comprehend the warbling noises left on tape by a passing Soviet missile, but he must understand the conclusions drawn by the specialist from these noises and must be able to fit them into his picture of the Soviet decision-making machinery. To produce "the situation overview with the accent on the political"--and I totally agree with you that is what we are in business for--the analyst must be in no small way a generalist as well as a specialist. Of course we need specialization on topics and countries, and we need people who are willing to keep their noses to the grindstone long enough to acquire a mastery of their subjects. I think that our program will produce these and will give them the rewards they deserve. It will also, however, provide us with a leaven of specialists in broader problems of intelligence production, and we need those too.

Richard Lehman

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23 February 1971

MEMORANDUM TO: D/OCI

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Dick:

I think your proposed response to [REDACTED] is first rate. I also agree that it would be useful to see to it that word of its content gets about.

I have a few points I pass along for whatever use they may be:

1. I have reread the middle paragraph on page 3 several times and am not entirely sure that I understand its purport. I think my problem is that you refer to our young people as "good shoemakers" but then go on in the next sentence to describe them as of lower caliber than the line analysts. There is something here that doesn't quite track.

2. I think the adjective "cranky" on page 5 could do harm when you consider our hope that word of this paper would get around.

3. Your final point about a need to regard OCI responsibilities as broad rather than narrow is worth a treatise all by itself. I guess my concern is that I'm not sure we have the proper kind of machinery in the office to know which analysts are broadening themselves beyond their job descriptions and which are not.

4. In discussing the ideal and hypothetical OCI officer, you may run into a bit of trouble when you cite the ages at which you expect them to reach certain levels. To many of our younger folk the ages 35 (for GS-12 and 13) and 40 for the GS-14 may seem ages away. You might lessen the concern here if you dropped the reference to an incoming officer being about 28 and talked instead of the approximate number of years one would take to go from entry to various plateaus.

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5. There is one additional point which concerns me but which I do not think needs to be covered in this paper. It is touched upon in Joe's note to you when he asked "what kind of inducements can we offer a talented individual to persuade him to focus on a complex subject long enough that he is able to make an original contribution...?" Your ideal situation is based upon the expectation of a 20 to 25-year career. It is my feeling in the future that mobility will cause the average length of an office career to be much less than this. This is going to pose very difficult problems for the recruiter in identifying analyst types who will pay off quickly; for the trainer in preparing the recruit to do his job; and for the supervisor in making the most of the analysts assigned to him.



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